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RICHMOND COUNCIL FOR PEACE EDUCATION

Anti-War Group Gets Signatures to Seek End to N. Viet Bombing

An anti-war group here is gathering signatures for a letter urging President Johnson to end the bombing in North Viet Nam.

The Richmond Council for Peace Education started circulating the letter Saturday at a meeting in which two college professors had criticized United States action in Viet Nam.

"We greatly deplore the resumption of bombing of North Viet Nam," the letter says.

"We were gratified by the pause in the bombing of North Viet Nam," it continues. "We urge the end of all bombing. A

complete truce is the first step towards negotiation."

The letter also urges the President to "implement your words of peace by starting negotiations with all parties involved . . ."

Members of the audience received copies of the letter as they left the social hall of First Unitarian Church, where the meeting was held. Spaces for signatures were at the bottom of the mimeographed page, with a Richmond postoffice box number to which the completed form was to be returned.

The speakers were Richard J.

Coughlin and Maurice J. Meisner, both of the University of Virginia.

Coughlin, a professor of sociology, served as United States vice consul in Saigon from 1946 to 1948. Reviewing the independence movement there, he said the United States has "misread a number of signs in Asia, and never more tragically than in Indochina."

He asserted that the United States "lent support to French efforts to cultivate fictitious leaders—puppets" while the Vietnamese people as a whole

made freedom a rallying cry.

He said postwar leaders such as Ho Chi Minh were national heroes and "events have proved that these leaders were there to stay. Unless you work with them, it's hopeless."

CHINA'S ROLE

Meisner said Americans err in basic assumptions in regard to China. He said Peking is only seeking what it has traditionally regarded for a thousand years as China's sphere of influence.

"As far as their efforts in Africa are concerned," he said, "they try to exploit situations . . . like the CIA does. The only real difference is that the CIA is better financed."

As the professors expounded their Anti-war views their sign-carrying student counterparts were being jeered in Charlottesville.

Twenty-three student marchers paraded in a gentle rain before the jeers and snowballs of about 300 other students, the Associated Press reported.

One of the organizers of the march said the demonstration was not intended to get the United States out of Viet Nam, but to keep the war from escalating.

The Charlottesville march was an independent action, not affiliated with the local committee, its leaders said.